

Attorney Docket No. 23092.00

IN THE APPLICATION

OF

**PAUL E. GRAVER**

FOR A

HOSPITAL GOWN

LITMAN LAW  
OFFICES, LTD.  
P.O. BOX 15035  
ARLINGTON, VA 22215  
(703) 486-1000

## HOSPITAL GOWN

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### 1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to hospital garments. More 5 specifically, the invention is a one-piece hospital gown typically worn by a patient that facilitates the closure and partial removal of the hospital gown with relative ease while preserving the feeling of modesty of the patient.

#### 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

10 Medical examinations and treatments in a hospital or doctor's office frequently entail the examining physician or medical personnel viewing and touching certain parts of a patient's anatomy. Thus, it is often necessary for the patient to remove part or all of their clothing in order to allow access 15 to the targeted part of the patient's anatomy. Although medical providers usually give a patient a hospital gown to don prior to the examination or treatment, these hospital gowns normally amount to no more than a single sheet of material having apertures to receive the arms of the patient and generally

designed to conform to the human anatomy. The conventional hospital gown is typically open in the back from neck to knee, with at least one tie closure behind the neck, and may include a second tie across the rear at waist level. While this 5 conventional hospital gown may appear from the front to cover the more private portions of the body of the patient, nevertheless, many patients still experience feelings of embarrassment and loss of modesty as sensitive areas of patient's body may be partially or fully exposed by the rear of 10 the garment. Various hospital gowns for patients have long been known, and various inventions have been directed toward improving the fit, accessibility, and modesty of hospital gowns, but none disclose the hospital gown of the present invention.

U.S. Patent No. 4,215,434, issued August 5, 1980 to J. 15 Barron, describes a patient's hospital gown having a central portion with two flaps, each with a protruding strap, attached thereon where the flaps are manipulated to wrap around the body of the patient and the straps are secured in front of the patient. The straps are secured by hook and loop fasteners. 20 The unique flap design of the Barron invention precludes it from being easily donned by the typical wearer without explanation

and may prove difficult for elderly or mentally challenged patients to don without assistance.

U.S. Patent No. 4,422,186, issued December 27, 1983 to Loney, shows a hospital gown releasably secured by hook and loop fasteners from collar to sleeve. U.S. Patent No. 4,434,511, issued March 6, 1984 to Weiser, discloses a hospital gown in which a back panel is connected to a front panel along an edge extending all the way down one side, and over one shoulder on the opposite side of the garment, by hook and loop fasteners.

U.S. Patent No. 4,570,268, issued February 18, 1986 to Freeman, describes various embodiments of hospital gowns, including one embodiment exclusively using hook and loop fasteners down a midline of the garment from top to bottom, as well as from the collar to the end of the sleeve, and a second embodiment which uses tie closures to fasten the opening from top to bottom, but hook and loop to close an opening from collar to sleeve. The hook and loop fasteners are spaced apart at a ratio of 5:1 compared to overlap of the left and right panels.

U.S. Patent No. 5,062,159, issued November 5, 1991 to B. Jakub, shows a patient's hospital gown having a wrap around lower body portion and an upper body portion featuring a plurality of releasable seams to accommodate access to various

parts of the anatomy. The lower portion has a drawstring at the waist and is split vertically with hook and loop closures. The upper portion is made from two pieces partially sewn to the lower portion and which overlap with hook and loop closures.

5 The bifurcated design and various releasable seams do expedite access to certain body parts, but that advantage is diminished when compared against the time required to fasten the plurality of seams when detached.

U.S. Patent No. 5,133,086, issued July 28, 1992 to Truitt et al., shows several embodiments of a hospital gown, including one embodiment which appears to open from neck to knee and has hook and loop closures, but no tie closures. Hospital garments having flaps, wraps, or sleeves releasably secured by hook and loop closures are also shown in U.S. Patent No. 5,228,141, 15 issued July 20, 1993 to Remsky et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,274,852, issued January 4, 1994 to J.D. Hogan.

U.S. Patent No. 5,878,437, issued March 9, 1999 to C. Pater, discloses a hospital gown that features hook and loop fasteners along the vertical seam in the rear of the garment and 20 hook and loop elements on the front of the garment that allow the bottom edge of the front portion to be raised to the upper torso region and secured with corresponding hook and loop

elements, thereby permitting unobstructed access to the more private front portions of the patient. Pater does not describe a tie closure that can be used in addition to or alternatively to the hook and loop closures.

5       U.S. Patent No. 6,484,321, issued November 26, 2002 to R. Shamam, teaches a multi-purpose patient hospital gown featuring a closed rear design where the seam is fastened in the front with ties located near the neck opening and abdomen portion of the hospital gown. The spacing of the ties does not offer 10 optimal modesty to the patient as the potential for exposure is increased by the limited number of ties.

Other hospital gowns or garments having hook and loop closures are described in U.S. Patent No. 6,032,288, issued March 7, 2000 to J. Simone (a gown sewn inside a robe, both 15 closed by hook and loop closures over the shoulder); U.S. Patent No. 6,134,715, issued October 24, 2000 to L.J. McLennan (wrap around medical gown having V-shaped notch and hook and loop closures); and U.S. Patent No. 6,216,271, issued April 17, 2001 to C. Chen (hospital jacket or gown which opens along one side 20 and between neck and shoulder, having hook and loop closures).

None of the above hospital gowns or garments provides the patient with the option of using either hook and loop closures

or tie closures, either for personal preference, or if, for some reason, the hook and loop fastener closures become unusable.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant 5 invention as claimed. Thus a hospital gown solving the aforementioned problems is desired.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The hospital gown of the present invention is a one-piece garment defined generally by a body portion with sleeve portions 10 attached on opposing sides of the body portion. The body portion extends from the patient's neck to the patient's knees. The sides of the gown are secured in the rear by releasable closures. The releasable closures include a tie closure extending from opposite sides at the neck of the gown, and a 15 series of mating hook and loop fasteners extending from the neck to the bottom of the gown. Thus, the gown may be secured by the tie closure, or if the patient desires a more modest garment or is unable to tie the gown, by mating the hook and loop fasteners.

20 Accordingly, it is a principal object of the invention to provide a hospital gown for a patient that improves the

patient's sense of modesty while wearing the hospital gown, by providing the gown with hook and loop closures along the opposing edges of the rear panel.

It is another object of the invention to provide a hospital gown which may be easily donned or removed as necessary to permit access to various parts of the patient's anatomy by providing the gown with tie closures at the neck and hook and loop closures extending vertically down the rear of the gown.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a hospital gown which permits the patient the option of using either releasable tie closures or hook and loop closures for securing the gown.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a hospital gown that is simple to manufacture.

It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

Fig. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of a hospital gown according to the present invention, showing the front of the gown.

5 Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the hospital gown according to the present invention, showing the back of the gown when open.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the hospital gown according to the present invention with the releasable closures fastened.

10 Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

The present invention is a hospital gown, designated generally as 10 in the drawings. Referring to Fig. 1, the 15 hospital gown 10 is designed to cover the body of a patient while preserving the patient's sense of modesty and facilitating access to various parts of the patient's anatomy. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the hospital gown 10 is a loose-fitting, one-piece garment. The hospital gown 10 has a main body portion 20 with that wraps around the patient's body, defining a front side 24 and a rear side 26. Sleeves 30 and 31 are attached to 20  
24  
26

opposite sides of the upper section of the main body portion 20, allowing the hospital gown 10 to assume the general contours of the human anatomy. The upper section of the main body portion 20 and pair of sleeves 30, 31 are shaped along their 5 respective contiguous upper edges to define a neck opening 22.

Referring to Fig. 2, the rear side 26 of the hospital gown 10 has a gap 40 extending vertically from the neck opening 22 to the bottom of the main body portion 20 defined by the left and right sides of the body portion 20, shown in an open condition 10 in Fig. 2. At the top of the gap 40, tie strings 32 extend from the edges of the neck opening 22. The gap 40 is defined by a first edge 45a along the left side of the body portion 20 and a corresponding second edge 45b along the right side of the body portion 20, both of which run longitudinally from the neck 15 opening 22 to the bottom of the main body portion 20. A plurality of patches or strips 50a of hook and loop fabric fasteners are serially spaced along the outer surface of the first edge 45a from just below the tie string 32 to the bottom of the main body portion 20. A corresponding plurality of 20 patches or strips 50b of mating hook and loop fastening material are serially spaced along the inner surface of the second edge

45b from just below the tie string 32 to the bottom of the main body portion 20.

Referring to Fig. 3, the back 26 of the gown 10 is shown in with the closures fastened. The ties strings 32 are manipulated  
5 into a knot to close the neck opening 22. The gap 40 is closed when the second edge 45b is drawn closed to overlap the first edge 45a and the fastener strips 50b of the second edge 45b are engaged with their corresponding fastener strips 50a on the first edge 45a to releasably secure the right side of the body  
10 portion 20 to the left side.

It will be noted that although Fig. 3 shows both the tie closure 32 and the hook and loop fasteners 50a and 50b fastened, that the patient may optionally use either the tie closure 32 or the hook and loop fastener strips 50a and 50b or both, depending  
15 upon the level of comfort desired.

The main body portion 20 and the sleeves 30 and 31 are made from a soft and comfortable fabric, such as a 50% cotton - 50%polyester blend. The edges 45a and 45b may be formed by overlapping layers of the body portion which are sewn together  
20 to form a hem or seam.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

LITMAN LAW  
OFFICES, LTD.  
P.O. BOX 15035  
ARLINGTON, VA 22215  
(703) 486-1000